



The Old Ironsides Report

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Neighborhood advisory council meetings in Baghdad solve problems

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BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, met with influential local Iraqi citizens at a neighborhood advisory council meeting in the Huriya neighborhood of Baghdad Aug. 25. The brigade is attached to Task Force 1st Armored Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The neighborhood advisory council, or NAC, is one of many venues for meetings between U.S. soldiers and Iraqis that take place weekly across Baghdad and other parts of Iraq in order to gather information about reconstruction progress from the Iraqis.

District council members are selected from the 88 Neighborhood Advisory Councils. The number of neighborhood representatives on the district council is based upon the community's population. There are nine district councils in the city.

The Baghdad City Advisory Council consists of 37 members drawn from the district councils and is also based on the district's population.

In addition to giving the Iraqi people a voice and an outlet where their suggestions will be translated into action, the gatherings also allow U.S. military personnel to provide updates on current projects and provide perspective on projected finish dates.

"We came in; we liberated Baghdad; and we ousted the old government," said Staff Sgt. Clayton Holliday, an infantryman assigned to assist with organizing the NACs. "Now we have to start turning responsibility over to the Iraqi people or they will never be able to operate on their own."

The meetings are largely focused upon providing a listening ear, easing the minds of the Iraqi community leaders, and, consequently, the entire community.

"Democracy and freedom have come through as a result of the Americans -- because that is what they stand for," said Dr. Samir Adnon-Hanee, a genetic engineering scientist and member of the council. "We have come here, under this freedom, to communicate our problems with electricity, water and sewage."

The biggest issue on the slate for the council at this meeting was a malfunctioning sewage system.

"Sewage is the biggest problem," said Adnon-Hanee. "I cannot even take a shower because of the sewage backing up in to my home. We understand, however, that the previous regime left a bad system with big problems."

One of the problems is that the old and long-neglected sewage pipes are just too small for the increased population in Baghdad, a city of over four million people.

The immediacy of the problems in the communities can cause heightened emotions that pour over into the meetings, but the soldiers have been able to effectively communicate the scale of the problems and realistic timelines on repair.

"We don't want to make a temporary fix, because a lot of temporary fixes make a bigger problem. That is what the previous regime did."

"Together we have been trying to solve the problems, but we are finding it is all very complex," said Adnon-Hanee. "The U.S. Army has promised to solve all these problems, but with the help and patience of the Iraqi people."



A community member addresses the neighborhood advisory council on the subject of sewage problems in the city during a NAC meeting in the Huriya neighborhood of Baghdad Aug. 25. Also attending the meeting are soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, which is part of Task Force 1st Armored Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A Smart Tip From 1AD Safety

Avoid Contact with Animals

Animals can inflict serious injuries to soldiers. Animal bites can cause serious puncture wounds, and individuals could become infected with **RABIES**.

To avoid injury soldiers must:

- Not feed animals
- Avoid animals
- Not try to capture animals

NEWS

Isabel Leaves 4.5M Minus Power; 17 Dead

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) - Hurricane Isabel knocked out power to more than 4.5 million people before weakening into a tropical depression Friday as it raced toward Canada, swamping some tidal communities along Chesapeake Bay but breezing inland with less rain than expected. The storm was blamed for at least 17 deaths: nine in Virginia, three in North Carolina, two in Maryland, and one each in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Rhode Island.

Israel Blows Up Homes of Hamas Bombers

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) - Israeli troops blew up the West Bank homes of two Hamas suicide bombers Friday and searched a town for fugitives, as Yasser Arafat and leaders of his Fatah party started putting together a new Cabinet. The Palestinian prime minister-designate, Ahmed Qureia, has given Arafat and Fatah considerable say over the composition of his government. Qureia has said he wants to avoid confrontations with Arafat that helped bring down his predecessor, Mahmoud Abbas.

Man Pleads Innocent in Geoghan Slaying

WORCESTER, Mass. (AP) - An inmate accused of slaying former priest John J. Geoghan in prison pleaded innocent to murder Friday, then exited his arraignment screaming "Let's keep the kids safe!" and "Hold pedophiles accountable for their actions!" Joseph L. Druce allegedly beat and strangled Geoghan in the defrocked priest's cell at Souza-Baronowski Correctional Institute in Shirley on Aug. 23.

Ind. to Honor O'Bannon at State Service

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - An official state service for Gov. Frank O'Bannon was planned for 1 p.m. EDT Friday at the west steps of the Statehouse where was first inaugurated nearly seven years ago. The interfaith service was to feature personal touches, such as singing from a barbershop quartet, to official trappings including a 19-round artillery salute and a missing-man formation flyover of fighter jets from the Indiana Air National Guard.

Court to Announce Decision on Recall Date

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) - As a federal appeals court decides whether to reconsider the date of the recall election, candidates for Gov. Gray Davis' job are campaigning as if Election Day was still right around the corner. Even a decision anticipated as early as Friday from the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals will probably not be the final word.

SPORTS

Roddick Loses at Davis Cup in Slovakia

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (AP) - U.S. Open champion Andy Roddick lost to Dominik Hrbaty in four sets Friday, giving Slovakia a 1-0 lead over the United States in their World Group playoff in the Davis Cup. Hrbaty dropped the first set but rallied to win 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, putting the Americans in a hole in the best-of-five series as they try to remain in the top tier of Davis Cup.

Oddly Enough...

Buddhist Monk Completes Seven-Year Run

TOKYO (AP) -- A Buddhist priest dubbed the "marathon monk" has completed an ancient running ritual in the remote Japanese mountains that took seven years and covered a distance equivalent to a trip round the globe, wearing only a flowing white robe and flimsy straw sandals. The 44-year-old monk, Genshin Fujinami, returned Thursday from his 24,800-mile spiritual journey in the Hiei mountains, a range of five peaks that rise above the ancient capital of Kyoto. Dressed in his handmade sandals and robe, with a straw raincoat draped over his head, Fujinami was greeted at the end of his journey by a crowd of worshippers, who knelt to receive his blessings, said an official at Enryakuji Hoshuin, the temple that is guardian of the grueling tradition. "I entrusted everything to God. I am satisfied," Fujinami was quoted as saying. A rigorous regimen dictates that in each of the journey's first three years, the pilgrim must rise at midnight for 100 consecutive days to pray, run along an 18-mile trail stopping 250 times to pray along the way. In the next two years, he has to extend his runs to 200 days. In the winter, the pilgrim runner takes a break and spends the days doing temple chores. During the fifth year he must sit and chant mantras for nine days without food, water or sleep, in a trial called "doiri," or "entering the temple." In the sixth year, he walks 37.5 miles every day for 100 days. And in the seventh, he goes 52.5 miles for 100 days and then 18 miles for another 100 days, before returning to the temple. A few have done it twice; many more have not lived to finish. Traditionally, any monk, or gyoja, who can't continue to the end must take his own life, either by hanging or disembowelment.

On This Day In History: September 20th 1806

On this day in 1806, after nearly two-and-a-half years spent exploring the western wilderness, the Corps of Discovery arrived at the frontier village of La Charette, the first white settlement they had seen since starting their expedition in 1804. Entirely out of provisions and subsisting on wild plums, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and their men were understandably eager to reach home. Upon arriving at La Charette, the men fired a three-round salute to alert the inhabitants of their approach. After spending the evening celebrating, the expedition continued rapidly down the river and after two more days reached St. Louis. Lewis' first act in St. Louis was to send a note asking the postmaster to delay the mail headed east so he could write a quick letter to President Jefferson telling him that the intrepid Corps of Discovery had come home. The Lewis and Clark mission had been a spectacular success. The explorers had charted the upper reaches of the Missouri, reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and made the first major steps to opening of the trans-Mississippi West to American settlement.

Source: historychannel.com

Chaplain's Thought for the Day: Life is Today

**One must lose one's life in order to find it.
--Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

We are often so busy trying to control the outcome of the happenings in our daily lives, so intent on projecting our tomorrows that we let life slip by. Life is today. This is all we have for sure--the moments in our lives we cannot hold. Sometimes it feels as if those moments are beyond time and place, gifts from God to receive and give up at the same time. Like a dragonfly that lights on our hand and will either be crushed or will fly away if we try to close our fingers over it. Life is a series of things to let go of--our friends and loved ones, our children as they grow, our dreams, or our youth. Only we ourselves, our inner selves, are a constant to be found and learned about every day, in the present moment.